

PUBLIC COMMENTS (PC)-T

PC-T1

From: Donald & Diane Thompson [debryce1@verizon.net]
Sent: Sunday, July 07, 2013 4:40 PM
To: Parsons, 405 Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS
Subject: Re: I-405 Supplemental Documents

The picture that accompanies the I-405 re-do proposal is indeed awesome and obviously documents either "going to work" or "coming home from work". If one looks at the other side of the freeway (traffic in the other direction) there is not the significant congestion which is depicted. Normally I can get from Valley View to Bristol on the 405 in less than 20 minutes, of course not at the two periods of traffic congestion. But let's consider what the significant problems are with widening the 405 from say Valley View to Euclid. There are 16 over-passes of the 405 that will have to be rebuilt because there is no room for addition of a lane either south or north bound (the existing freeway is literally right up to the overpass supports). There are 4 overpasses by the 405 (at Beach, the two shopping centers and a storage facility) that will require significant re-building because there is no land on which to add a lane. The Westminster Mall will have its parking area and perimeter access road impacted because to add a lane a major addition of support structure (dirt mound or bridge supports) would be needed to add a lane. For those sections of the 405 not already addressed (the passes over the 405 or by the 405) there are significant problems literally all the way from Valley View to Euclid. Assuming that freeway standards require a shoulder lane for standing a vehicle in trouble there will be significant impact on existing homes and their noise abatement walls. Addition of a lane and the accompanying shoulder will have traffic literally right outside the residences or perhaps, in some cases, there will be major re-building of the residential areas. There will have to be provisioning, primarily on the north bound 405 for existing drainage ditches. What should also be noted is that not only will the overpassing structures need rebuilding but also the supporting on and off ramp provisions which in some cases will impact existing structures, either businesses or residential.

What could be investigated would be the addition in the center of the 405 of elevated lanes for south and north bound HOV much like the stretch of the 110 near downtown Los Angeles. Another possibility could be, similar to freeways near San Francisco but inverse, the permitting of any vehicle in the so-called HOV lane during specific times like from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Yet another possibility would be banning trucks during those same times noted in the previous sentence (trucks are a real nuisance in heavy traffic periods). Then again, one could just let be what exists, namely traffic congestion at various times of the day. While the rebuilding sounds nice, the fact of the matter is that it is next to impossible and would severely impact not only use of the 405 for decades but additionally those residential roads that connect the public to its homes, shopping areas, schools, and sources of entertainment. The re-building of the 405-22-605 stretch near Garden Grove and Seal Beach has been a major pain but also not a significant reduction in traffic congestion. What should be considered is that frequently the congestion one sees is not so much too many cars as to too many bad drivers.

Don Thompson

PC-T2

From: Donald & Diane Thompson [debryce1@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 07, 2013 11:57 AM
To: Parsons, 405 Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS
Subject: Re: I-405 Supplemental Documents

Sadly, I could not attend the July 24 meeting because I was out of town. I have read the reports and I must compliment the task group on an excellent study, however, there are some comments I need to make.

First, the picture that is used as a selling point is obviously either a going to work or coming home from work situation. The picture could even be indicative of an accident in the lanes going away from the picture taker since both directions indicate slow moving congestion and that is a condition that does not consistently occur during the "peak" travel periods. Further, a major contributor to the congestion could be bad drivers. All you need at any time of the day is one or more drivers not maintaining a proper speed for the lanes they are in, or drivers obviously slowing up to observe something, plus indiscriminate lane changing, to induce congestion. I travel the 405 from Valley View to Bristol (events at Segerstrom or South Coast Repertory or the mall) and consistently, other than going home or to work, I can generally make the trip in 10 to 12 minutes, or at about an average speed of 60 mph, or just under the posted limit.

If it is deemed necessary that the freeway be modified, one change that was not mentioned should be considered. If you drive north from Bristol, at almost anytime of day, there is congestion and difficult driving until you pass Brookhurst. That condition is caused by the variations in the number of lanes from 6 to 5 then 4 general purpose lanes and the inability of many drivers to cope with the freeway going from 6 to 5 to 4 lanes and having to adjust their lane travel. If the freeway must be changed then one general purpose lane could be added south from Valley View to Brookhurst and then north from Brookhurst to Valley View. A 5th general purpose lane going south already exists at Brookhurst and a 5th general purpose lane going north is presently removed at Brookhurst. As you can tell, I am not too enthusiastic about any changes to the 405 - impact to the neighboring residential and business areas will be tremendous and will exist for many years (lane additions will not only rework the overpasses but also the access to and from them and their nearby neighborhoods).

Additionally there are many places on the 405, such as at the Westminster shopping mall, that present significant challenges to the addition of a lane and attendant shoulder. There are at least 4 places where there is no existing land on which to add a lane, hence lane addition will require bridge-like works. Rework of the existing Beach boulevard overpass would be a very significant challenge because any partial blockage of this very important, and heavily used, north-south passage could cause traffic congestion worse than what has been implied on the 405 as a requirement for freeway lane addition.

A traffic decongestion possibility that wasn't addressed could be the restriction of truck usage of the 405. Truck usage of the 405 could be banned from 6 am to 8 am and again from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. A major contribution to present congestion is the presence of trucks in both the outside lane and the one next to it as they chug away between 55 and 60 mph plus their lane changes and entering and leaving the freeway.

One significant omission in the reports is the impact from the rework of the freeway crossovers as well as the exits and entrances to the 405. Not only is access to and from the crossovers impacted by the proposed freeway lane additions but in all probability there will be impact to the residences, businesses, and cross streets that abut surface streets that the crossovers support or are adjacent to. The same impacts will affect the freeway access and exit lanes. These impacts will require construction and rework of existing facilities and will probably add significant cost to the proposal as well as require coordination with the existing business owners/civic governments.

A possible solution to this supposed congestion could be the addition of an elevated HOV lane, north and south, similar to the work that was added to the 110 near downtown Los Angeles. It would be a challenge to design and build but it would "add" a general purpose lane by conversion of the existing HOV lanes. And speaking of "conversion" of the existing HOV lanes, they could be opened to usage by all passenger cars during specific periods like those time periods mentioned above for truck banning, which would in effect "add" a general purpose lane.

The current re-building of the 405-22-605 stretch has been a major pain and also hasn't resulted in a significant reduction in traffic congestion. I realize the re-build has not been completed, but as I mentioned above, a lot of the current congestion results from poor driving. All you need to see is the late decision of drivers "oh, I need to be over there" as they try to adjust to the lane they should have anticipated earlier.

Frankly, I do not consider it worth the cost, inconvenience to the adjacent neighborhoods and other functions, as well as general impact to society, just to partially alleviate the freeway congestion which will continue to exist so long as there are mediocre drivers and short duration high volume traffic periods.

PC-T3

From: Thronson@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, June 29, 2013 11:14 AM
To: Parsons, 405.Supplemental.Draft.EIR.EIS
Subject: question

Sirs....

I live in Long Beach and frequently exit from 605 S onto either 7th street and/or 22W Trying to figure out your email, it doesn't appear my route will be changed. Is this correct?

Also, driving south on 405 and trying to exit onto Seal Beach Blvd. E, which I haven't driven in awhile, is this open? I will be driving to the Ayres Hotel

Thank you for your help.

Shirley Thronson

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RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS (PC)-T

Response to Comment Letter PC-T1

Comment PC-T1-1

Caltrans and OCTA thank you for participating in the environmental process for the I-405 Improvement Project. Your comment is not specific to the new information and analysis presented within the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS. You will be notified when the Final EIR/EIS is available for review. Please see Appendix R1 (Response to Comments on Draft EIR/EIS) for Responses to Comments PC-T13-1 through PC-T13-4 and PC-T14-1 and PC-T14-2.

Response to Comment Letter PC-T2

Comment PC-T2-1

Caltrans and OCTA thank you for participating in the environmental process for the I-405 Improvement Project. Your comment is not specific to the new information and analysis presented within the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS; however, your comments were addressed in Appendix R1 (Response to Comments on Draft EIR/EIS). You will be notified at the address provided in your comment when the Final EIR/EIS is available for review.

The anticipated performance of the freeway with and without the build alternatives is summarized in the Draft EIR/EIS in Tables 3.1.6-4 through 3.1.6-8, and 3.1.6-12 through 3.1.6-14.

Comment PC-T2-2

Lane continuity is addressed in the Draft EIR/EIS, which states on page 1-23: “Currently, three lanes are added to I-405 northbound from SR-73 as it merges into I-405 approximately 1.5 miles north of SR-55. There are no lane additions from SR-55 that extend to SR-73. The lanes added by SR-73 are subsequently dropped at the next three local interchanges at the Harbor Boulevard, Euclid Street, and Brookhurst Street interchanges, creating a series of bottlenecks. The proposed build alternatives would remove one or more of those lane drops and enhance lane continuity in the corridor. Continuing the project south to SR-55 would further compound rather than address lane continuity problems.”

Comment PC-T2-3

Page 2-15 of the Draft EIR/EIS indicates that widening of the freeway under any of the proposed alternatives would require the replacement of 17 bridges over the freeway. Temporary ramp closures necessary to construct the project are identified in Table S-1 of the Draft EIR/EIS and more fully explained in Section 3.1.4 of the Draft EIR/EIS. Acquisition of right-of-way (ROW)

necessary to construct the project is identified in Table S-1 of the Draft EIR/EIS and fully explained in Section 3.1.1 of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Comment PC-T2-4

Prohibition of trucks on interstate highways is not permitted.

Comment PC-T2-5

See Response to Comment PC-T2-3.

Comment PC-T2-6

Elevated alternatives were considered and rejected. See Section 2.2.7 of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Comment PC-T2-7

The current construction is not part of the proposed I-405 Improvement Project. The improvements currently under construction are assumed to be in place prior to the start of construction of the proposed I-405 Improvement Project.

Response to Comment Letter PC-T3

Comment PC-T3-1

Caltrans and OCTA thank you for participating in the environmental process for the I-405 Improvement Project. Your comments on new information and analysis presented within the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS were considered during identification of the Preferred Alternative as described in the Final EIR/EIS. You will be notified at the address provided in your comment when the Final EIR/EIS is available for review.

The I-405 Improvement Project will not change the paths from I-605 southbound to westbound 7th Street. The current construction is not part of the proposed I-405 Improvement Project.